

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

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1. An electronic device comprising:
    - 2 a user-interface feature configurable to have a selected orientation about at least a first axis;
    - 3 a detection mechanism to detect orientation information about the electronic device; and
    - 4 one or more components configured to select the orientation of the user-interface feature
    - 5 based on the detected orientation information, and to configure the user-interface
    - 6 feature according to the selected orientation, wherein the selected orientation is based
    - 7 on at least a first reference point on the first axis.
  2. The electronic device of claim 1, wherein the user-interface feature is
    - 2 symmetrically disposed about a first axis, and wherein the selected orientation
    - 3 defines a reference indication on the first axis.
  3. The electronic device of claim 1, wherein the user-interface feature is
    - 2 symmetrically disposed about a first axis and a second axis, and wherein the
    - 3 selected orientation defines a first reference indication on the first axis, and a
    - 4 second reference indication on a second axis.
  4. The electronic device of claim 2, wherein the user-interface feature
    - 2 includes a display, and wherein the one or more components select the
    - 3 orientation by selecting a top-down direction on the first axis for displaying
    - 4 content on the display.

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1 5. The electronic device of claim 1, wherein the user-interface feature  
2 includes a set of buttons disposed symmetrically about the first axis, wherein  
3 the one or more components include a processor that selects the orientation of  
4 the set of buttons by specifying a reference indication that defines a position of  
5 each button relative to the first axis, and wherein the processor assigns a  
6 function from a set of functions to each of the plurality of buttons based on the  
7 position of each button.

1 6. The electronic device of claim 1, wherein the one or more components  
2 include a processor.

1 7. The electronic device of claim 1, wherein one or more components  
2 include a display driver.

1 8. The electronic device of claim 1, wherein the detection mechanism  
2 includes a plurality of sensor areas that detect user-contact.

1 9. The electronic device of claim 8, wherein the plurality of sensor areas  
2 detect orientation information by being individually actuatable so that one or  
3 more actuated sensor areas form a select portion of the plurality of sensors that  
4 combine to define the orientation information.

1 10. The electronic device of claim 1, wherein the detection mechanisms  
2 includes a first actuatable surface and a second actuatable surface, wherein  
3 orientation information is detected by determining which of the first and second  
4 actuatable surface is actuated by user-contact.

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1 11. The electronic device of claim 10, wherein the orientation is selected so  
2 as to configure the user-interface feature for left-handedness or right-  
3 handedness when one of the first or second actuatable surfaces is actuated.

1 12. The electronic device of claim 1, wherein the user-interface feature is a  
2 handwriting input mechanism, and wherein the one or more components include  
3 a processor that selects the orientation of the handwriting input mechanism to be  
4 either for a left-handed user or a right-handed user depending on the orientation  
5 information detected by the detection mechanism.

1 13. The electronic device of claim 10, wherein the plurality of sensor areas  
2 are arranged to detect a user's hand orientation when the user grips the  
3 electronic device.

1 14. The electronic device of claim 1, wherein the user-interface feature  
2 includes a digital input feature of a display, and wherein the one or more  
3 components configure the user-interface feature according to the selected  
4 orientation by determining a position of the digital input feature on the display.

1 15. The electronic device of claim 1, wherein the one or more components  
2 select the orientation of the user-interface feature based on the detected  
3 orientation information only if the electronic device is first determined to not  
4 have been in active use for a set duration of time.

1 16. A method for configuring a electronic device, the method comprising:

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2 detecting at least one user-contact in a plurality of possible detectable user-  
3 contacts with the electronic device;  
4 interpreting an orientation for a user-interface feature from the detected one or  
5 more user-contacts; and  
6 configuring the user-interface feature according to the interpreted orientation.

1 17. The method of claim 16, wherein interpreting an orientation for a user-  
2 interface feature from the detected one or more user-contacts includes  
3 determining a reference indication of the user-interface feature about one or  
4 more axes from the one or more contacts.

1 18. The method of claim 17, further comprising determining reference  
2 indication about one or more axes that the user-interface feature is  
3 symmetrically disposed about.

1 19. The method of claim 17, wherein determining the reference indication  
2 includes determining a direction for content appearing on a display.

1 20. The method of claim 17, wherein configuring the user-interface feature  
2 according to the interpreted orientation includes assigning an action to each  
3 button in a button set using the reference indication.

1 21. The method of claim 16, wherein detecting at least one user-contact in a  
2 plurality of possible detectable user-contacts with the electronic device includes  
3 detecting a first button press from a set of at least two or more possible button  
4 presses.

1 22. The method of claim 16, wherein detecting at least one user-contact in a  
2 plurality of possible detectable user-contacts with the electronic device includes  
3 detecting a grip configuration of a user from one or more sensors on a housing  
4 of the electronic device.

1 23. The method of claim 16, wherein interpreting an orientation for a user-  
2 interface feature includes determining a top-down vertical orientation for a  
3 display on the electronic device, and wherein configuring the user-interface  
4 feature includes configuring the display so as to display content according to the  
5 top-down vertical orientation.

1 24. The method of claim 16, wherein interpreting an orientation for a user-  
2 interface feature includes determining a right-left horizontal orientation for a  
3 display on the electronic device, and wherein configuring the user-interface  
4 feature includes configuring the display so as to display content according to the  
5 right-left horizontal orientation.

1 25. The method of claim 16, wherein interpreting an orientation for a user-  
2 interface feature includes identifying the orientation of a digital input  
3 mechanism on a display of the electronic device.

1 26. The method of claim 25, wherein identifying the orientation of a digital  
2 input mechanism on a display of the electronic device includes selecting a  
3 position of a handwriting input area on the display of the electronic device.

FOOTNOTES

1 27. The method of claim 26, wherein identifying the orientation of a digital  
2 input mechanism on a display of the electronic device includes selecting an  
3 arrangement of multiple character entry boxes for the handwriting input area  
4 appearing on the display.

1 28. The method of claim 16, wherein interpreting an orientation for a user-  
2 interface feature includes identifying a reference indication for the user-  
3 interface feature based on the detected one or more user-contacts.

29. An electronic device comprising:

a display disposed symmetrically about one or more axes, the display being configurable to have a selected orientation based on a reference indication on the one or more axes;

a detection mechanism to detect orientation information of the electronic device in use; and

one or more components configured to automatically determine the reference indication and to select the orientation of the display based on the determined reference indication.

1 30. The electronic device of claim 28, where the reference indication identifies at least  
2 one of a top-down direction or right-left direction of the display.

31. An electronic device comprising:

- a set of actuatable surfaces disposed symmetrically about one or more axes, the set of actuatable surfaces being configurable to have a selected orientation based on a reference indication on the one or more axes;
- a detection mechanism to detect orientation information of the electronic device in use; and
- one or more components configured to automatically determine the reference indication and to select the orientation of the set of actuatable surfaces based on the determined reference indication

1 32. The electronic device of claim 31, wherein the orientation of the set of actuatable  
2 surfaces defines an action assigned to each button in the set of buttons.